Experiences of Women With Gestational Trophoblastic Neoplasia Treated With High-Dose Chemotherapy and Stem Cell Transplantation: A Qualitative Study

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Purpose/Objectives: To explore the experiences of women with gestational trophoblastic neoplasia during and after treatment to understand their perspectives, priorities, and concerns.

Research Approach: A descriptive, exploratory study using in-depth semistructured interviews.

Setting: All interviews were conducted in a quiet, designated room at Weston Park Hospital in Sheffield, South Yorkshire.

Participants: Women with gestational trophoblastic neoplasia who had received stem cell transplantation from 2003 to 2013. Ten patients were eligible, and eight agreed to participate.

Methodologic Approach: Interviews were carried out over the phone and were recorded and transcribed verbatim. Framework analysis was carried out to generate in-depth descriptions of participants’ experiences.

Findings: Participants described significant physical, psychological, and social effects during and following treatment. Recovery was slow, and treatment had long-term effects on sexuality and body image. The impact of the women’s diagnosis and treatment on their children was a primary concern.

Interpretation: The study provided insight into the multidimensional impact of stem cell transplantation, which can continue after treatment. The need for family-centered services for patients with dependent children was identified.

Implications for Nursing: Nurses need to develop services that effectively communicate the challenges of stem cell transplantation to patients and provide family-centered care and late effects and rehabilitation services.

Women receiving high-dose chemotherapy with stem cell transplantation for gestational trophoblastic neoplasia (GTN) face unique challenges associated with a rare cancer diagnosis that requires arduous treatment and an uncertain outcome. The purpose of the study was to explore the experiences of women with GTN following high-dose chemotherapy with stem cell transplantation to understand their perspectives, priorities, and concerns.

Gestational trophoblastic disease (GTD) comprises a group of pregnancy-related tumors arising from the trophoblastic tissue, one of which is called a hydatidiform mole (complete or partial). The worldwide incidence of GTD varies considerably; in the United Kingdom, the incidence of GTD is about 1.5 per 1,000 live births, and the incidence in the United States is similar (Choi, Lee, Smith, & Kim, 2015). In most cases, GTD presents as a benign tumor, but malignant change occurs in about 15% of complete moles and in 0.5%–1% of partial moles (Choi...